

REMARKS

On page 4, paragraph 9 of the Office Action, the Examiner only objected to dependent claims 3-7 and 13 and stated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicant has canceled claim 13 (13/1), and added its limitation to independent parent claim 1, whereby the amended **claim 1 now is allowable**.

Applicant has rewritten claims 3 (3/1), 4 (4/1), 6 (6/1) and 7 (7/1) in independent form, whereby all of **claims 3-7 now should be allowable**.

Since the rejected claims 2, 8-12, 14 and 15 now are **dependent on the allowable claim 1 (1 + 13)**, Applicant respectfully submits that **claims 2, 8-12, 14 and 15 are also now allowable**.

By the above amendments, the three rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 103(a) have been overcome (have been rendered moot) in view of the above amendments which, in effect, cancel these art-rejected claims in the form in which they stood at the time of the rejection.

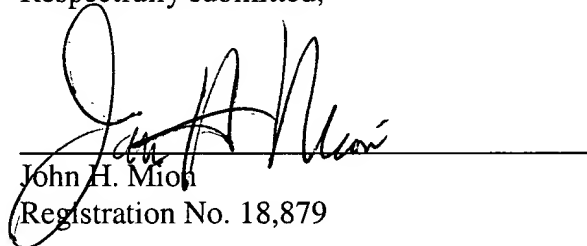
Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 103(a), and now to **allow claims 1-12, 14 and 15**; however, if for any reason the Examiner feels that the application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to **call the undersigned attorney** to discuss any unresolved issues and to expedite the disposition of the application.

Applicant files concurrently herewith an Excess Claim Fee Payment Letter (with fee) to cover the cost of the two (2) excess independent claims generated by this Amendment.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Appln. No. 09/429,026

Applicant also files concurrently herewith a Petition (with fee) for an Extension of Time of one month. Applicant hereby petitions for any extension of time which may be required to maintain the pendency of this application, and any required fee for such extension is to be charged to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. The Commissioner is also authorized to charge any additional fees under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 and/or § 1.17 necessary to keep this application pending in the Patent and Trademark Office or credit any overpayment to said Deposit Account No. 19-4880.

Respectfully submitted,



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